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VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SPECIALIST SERIES

This series includes those classes in a vocational rehabilitation program involving staff support activities, supervision or performance of such assignments as the planning and establishment of training programs for persons with disabilities; the supervision of persons with disabilities while in training and during the adjustment period on the job; and the placement of persons with disabilities in gainful employment.

The rehabilitation of a person with a disability is a complex process involving the skills and abilities of a wide variety of technical and professional "specialists" such as surgeons, psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, physical therapists, occupational therapists, social case workers and the vocational rehabilitation specialists. The desired result of their coordinated efforts is the restoration of an individual with a disability to the fullest physical, mental, social, vocational and economic usefulness of which he is capable.

Within this framework of coordinated services, the vocational rehabilitation specialist is the occupational training and placement specialist. Coordinating these services with those of other rehabilitation specialists, the vocational rehabilitation specialist works towards the ultimate goal of satisfactory job placement and/or the adjustment of individuals with disabilities to their daily environment.

This series of classes contains positions engaged in providing and monitoring the provision of direct services and those of a supervisory nature. The differences in levels of classes providing direct services are based on the complexities of the assignments and the nature and extent of supervision exercised and received by the incumbent. For example, a journey worker position under the general supervision of a vocational rehabilitation specialist of a higher level handles a range of cases from the simple cases where supervisory guidance is of a general nature, to the complex cases in which the clients are severely disabled and closer supervisory guidance is provided where special rehabilitation procedures and practices must be followed.

The supervisory levels of work are distinguished by the kind and degree of supervision exercised over subordinate positions,

the number of subordinate supervisory levels, the scope and variety of services offered by the unit, and the complexity of the cases composing the workload of the unit.

This is an amendment to the specification for the classes VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SPECIALIST I, II, III, IV and V (VOCATIONAL REHAB SPCLT I, II, III, IV and V), which was approved on March 17, 1997.

DATE APPROVED: _____

MIKE McCARTNEY

Director of Human Resources Development

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SPECIALIST I
(VOCATIONAL REHAB SPCLT I)

3.201

Distinguishing Characteristics:

This is the entry-level trainee class for the Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist series. A position in this class receives training in the basic principles, methods and techniques of vocational rehabilitation counseling, and the work processes, forms and reports peculiar to the agency. In addition to training, a position in this class also receives orientation relating to the agency's role, philosophy of services, commitments, policies, procedures, rules and regulations pertinent to the goals and objectives of the program and the organization of the department.

Assignments are made concurrently with orientation and training. Specific and detailed instructions as to the tasks to be performed and the procedures to be followed are outlined at the time the assignments are made. Work is critically reviewed for compliance with instructions, thoroughness and application of vocational rehabilitation techniques and methods. Continued guidance and instructions are provided during the progress of the assignment, including the manner in which finished work is to be submitted, with less supervision as training progresses.

Cases assigned are those in which the problem is limited in scope, involving the provision of limited vocational counseling and allied rehabilitative services to persons with physical and mental disabilities. The assignments are provided to give opportunity for a trainee to analyze, diagnose and evaluate cases and recommend and take an approved course of action. Tasks performed are part of a training program to provide for growth and development in the professional field.

Examples of Duties: *(Positions may not be assigned all of the duties listed, nor do the examples necessarily include all the duties that may be assigned. The omission of specific statements does not preclude management from assigning such duties if such duties are a logical assignment for the position. The classification of a position should not be based solely on the examples of duties performed.)*

Interviews clients and other persons; obtains information concerning interests, abilities, character, personality traits, motivation for employment and physical, mental and emotional conditions of individuals; arranges for physical examinations, diagnostic and treatment services; administers and interprets vocational, interest and aptitude tests; evaluates data on clients and analyzes their needs; provides counseling and guidance in making vocational choices; assists in making determinations with respect to the provision of training; assists in making arrangements for clients' on-the-job training; maintains records of cases assigned; refers clients to community resource agencies if necessary; and maintains contacts with employers in various types of industries to promote employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Knowledge and Abilities Required:

Knowledge of: Social Sciences.

Ability to: Learn the principles, methods and techniques of vocational rehabilitation; learn and interpret laws, rules and regulations pertaining to vocational rehabilitation services of the department; elicit pertinent information from people and relate such information to a helpful course of action; present ideas and information clearly and concisely, orally or in writing; and exercise tact and discretion in dealing with clients and the general public.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SPECIALIST II
(VOCATIONAL REHAB SPCLT II)

3.202

Distinguishing Characteristics:

This class is the advanced trainee level through which the trainee advances as part of his/her progression to full performance as an independent worker. Work assignments require the application of principles, methods and techniques of vocational rehabilitation to provide rehabilitative services, training and job placement for individuals with disabilities where the disability is not such as to make successful vocational rehabilitation and placement difficult. The trainee is given a caseload assignment ranging from very simple, where supervisory control is of a general nature, to moderately complex in which the psycho-socio-emotional effects of the disability make the rehabilitative services more complex, thereby making closer technical supervision over the incumbent necessary. As the trainee's knowledge and abilities increase, additional assignments characteristic of higher level work are made for developmental purposes and supervision is gradually relaxed. Completed work is reviewed for soundness of analysis, thoroughness and technical accuracy.

Examples of Duties: *(Positions may not be assigned all of the duties listed, nor do the examples necessarily include all the duties that may be assigned. The omission of specific statements does not preclude management from assigning such duties if such duties are a logical assignment for the position. The classification of a position should not be based solely on the examples of duties performed.)*

Secures and reviews various information pertaining to the physical, psychological, emotional, social, employment and other pertinent conditions and backgrounds of clients with physical or mental disabilities; administers and interprets psychological and vocational tests; evaluates data on clients and analyzes their needs; arranges for medical, surgical, psychiatric or hospital care and treatment of clients; recommends purchases of necessary services for clients; counsels clients and assists them in selecting and attaining appropriate job objectives; arranges for clients to obtain job training; works out financial assistance plans with clients undergoing treatment or training; refers clients to community resource agencies if necessary; counsels clients during the rehabilitation process and advises or assists them with personal, social and vocational adjustment problems;

assists clients in securing employment consistent with their capacities and training; conducts follow up investigations of clients to insure proper placement and vocational adjustment; attends and participates in meetings and conferences; meets with representatives of other agencies and interprets and explains the agency's services; refers complex cases to the supervisor for discussion and disposition; contacts employers regarding job placement for persons with disabilities and promotes the hiring of clients; maintains case records; and prepares and submits reports.

Knowledge and Abilities Required:

Knowledge of: The various social, psychological, economic and emotional factors influencing the behavior and attitudes of individuals; principles and practices of interviewing; basic social work techniques and methods; and local employment conditions and employment opportunities.

Ability to: Obtain, analyze and evaluate facts; learn and apply methods and procedures used in psychological and vocational testing; learn and apply the methods and techniques of counseling; learn and apply laws, rules, regulations and other standards pertaining to the agency's services; establish and maintain effective working relationships with clients, co-workers, representatives of other agencies and the general public; and speak effectively before others and prepare clear and concise written and oral reports.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SPECIALIST III
(VOCATIONAL REHAB SPCLT III)

3.203

Distinguishing Characteristics:

This class is the full journey worker level in the vocational rehabilitation field where positions perform vocational counseling, evaluation and rehabilitation services for the full range of cases coming within the scope of a department's vocational rehabilitation program. It is characterized by effective utilization of a wide variety of vocational rehabilitation counseling skills and the exercise of informed professional judgment in the process of assisting the individual with a disability toward satisfactory job placement and/or adjustment to daily environment.

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Supervisory control over the positions in this class is of a general nature and is normally exercised through regularly scheduled conferences and review of records, reports and correspondence. The supervisory conference is for the purpose of discussing difficult or problem cases, evaluating effectiveness of work and providing guidance as the need is indicated, particularly on the more difficult aspects of the complex cases.

Examples of Duties: *(Positions may not be assigned all of the duties listed, nor do the examples necessarily include all the duties that may be assigned. The omission of specific statements does not preclude management from assigning such duties if such duties are a logical assignment for the position. The classification of a position should not be based solely on the examples of duties performed.)*

Working independently, under general supervision, secures and reviews various information pertaining to the physical, psychological, emotional, social, employment and other pertinent conditions and backgrounds of physically and/or mentally disabled clients; administers and interprets psychological and vocational tests; evaluates data on clients and analyzes their needs; plans and develops treatment and training plans for clients; recommends purchase of necessary services for clients; counsels clients and assists them in selecting and attaining appropriate job objectives; arranges for clients to obtain job training; works out financial assistance plans with clients undergoing treatment or training; refers clients to community resource agencies if necessary; counsels clients during the rehabilitation process and advises or assists them with personal, social and vocational adjustment problems; assists clients in securing employment consistent with their capacities and training; conducts follow up investigations of clients to insure proper placement and vocational adjustment; attends and participates in meetings and conferences; meets with representatives of other agencies and interprets and explains the agency's services; provides consultation services to others concerning the rehabilitation problems of persons with disabilities; contacts employers regarding job placement for persons with disabilities and promotes the hiring of clients; conducts job and industrial studies to expand opportunities for the employment of persons with disabilities; may instruct or supervise a limited number of employees assisting or participating in the program; maintains case records; and prepares and submits reports.

Knowledge and Abilities Required:

Knowledge of: Federal and local legislation, rules and regulations pertaining to vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities; occupations suitable for persons with disabilities; principles and practices of vocational rehabilitation and rehabilitation training; the various social, psychological, economic and emotional factors influencing the behavior and attitudes of individuals; principles and practices of interviewing; basic social work methods and techniques; local employment conditions and employment opportunities; the use of psychological tests and measurements in vocational counseling; and the techniques and methods of counseling.

Ability to: Obtain, analyze and evaluate facts; interpret and explain the vocational rehabilitation program to others; establish and maintain effective working relationships with clients, co-workers, representatives of other agencies, and the general public; speak effectively before others; and prepare clear and concise written and oral reports.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SPECIALIST IV
(VOCATIONAL REHAB SPCLT IV)

3.204

Distinguishing Characteristics:

Positions in this class reflect the complete mastery of professional vocational rehabilitation services skills and include the first level professional vocational rehabilitation supervisor, program specialist and consultant. Positions in this class are typically of the following general types:

- 1) The fully trained and experienced vocational rehabilitation specialist who spends a significant portion of his time in direct performance of work typical of the Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist III class and concurrently supervises a small group of lower-grade specialists.
- 2) The senior technical specialist who is assigned the most difficult and complex cases coming within the organizational segment's vocational rehabilitation program with no limitation as to the difficulty of services to be performed. The difficult and complex cases comprise the entire or almost entire caseload. The work is performed independently with infrequent recourse to supervisory guidance. The specialist is responsible for determining when the

supervisor should be consulted for problems and for keeping the supervisor informed.

Illustrative of the type of cases are clients who have been medically determined by organizations such as the Social Security Administration to have impairments which are lasting and severe to the extent that they are unable to work, or cases with all of the following factors:

- a) Has a physical or mental impairment that results in the limitation of one or more functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, personal care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome. The physical or mental impairment must seriously restrict or prevent the individual from preparing for, entering into, engaging in, or retaining gainful employment, to the extent that the individual is unable to overcome the limitations without vocational rehabilitation services. The limitations must be relatively permanent and not subject to change or improvement without substantial intervention over an extended period of time;
- b) Requires three or more major vocational rehabilitation services (such as vocational rehabilitation counseling and guidance, physical restoration, mental restoration, vocational training, personal adjustment training, specialized job placement, rehabilitation technology, or other substantial services); and
- c) Requires vocational rehabilitation services for six (6) months or more.

This type of position is in the minority in a typical line organizational segment since it is above the full professional vocational rehabilitation specialist level.

- 3) The vocational rehabilitation specialist at a field station with the full range of cases coming within the department's vocational rehabilitation program. The supervisor and/or consultant are physically located on another island and are not readily available for consultations by telephone or in person. Such an assignment is usually in a given geographical area involving continuing responsibility for all services usually provided by a vocational rehabilitation specialist, program planning and evaluation, establishment of priorities and development and maintenance of public

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understanding, sound working relationships and coordination of services with a wide range of residents and other organizations in the communities served. The vocational rehabilitation specialist may supervise subordinate vocational rehabilitation specialists.

- 4) A program specialist who participates in program planning and evaluation activities, with development, revision and evaluation of the implementation of policies, procedures and standards in a program area and/or who provides advice and assistance to line personnel.
- 5) The vocational rehabilitation specialist who independently performs the full range of activities in a program which certifies and regulates vocational rehabilitation agencies and others who provide direct services in the vocational rehabilitation of industrially injured employees. The specialist evaluates and validates the services provided for each industrially injured worker through the review of reports and information submitted by the vocational rehabilitation agencies and other providers of vocational rehabilitation services, physicians, insurance agencies and the injured worker.

Examples of Duties: *(Positions may not be assigned all of the duties listed, nor do the examples necessarily include all the duties that may be assigned. The omission of specific statements does not preclude management from assigning such duties if such duties are a logical assignment for the position. The classification of a position should not be based solely on the examples of duties performed.)*

In a line office, 1) supervises a small group of lower level vocational rehabilitation specialists of an operating unit; makes work assignments to subordinates and reviews their work; provides guidance and assistance to subordinates in handling the more difficult and complex cases; interprets and explains policies, procedures and standards; evaluates the work performance of subordinates and approves leaves; and/or 2) independently provides vocational rehabilitation services to the most difficult and complex cases; and/or 3) independently provides all vocational rehabilitation services in a geographic area and performs program planning and evaluation and community liaison activities. Prepares operational reports and correspondence; works with personnel of other divisions and agencies in matters pertaining to vocational rehabilitation and allied services; establishes and maintains sound working relationships; makes

recommendations for modifications of existing vocational rehabilitation services and for the initiation of new services; initiates training programs for the clients; provides orientation and in-service training to new professional personnel; and initiates consultation with supervisor for broad perspective of the program.

As a staff or program specialist, 1) provides technical guidance and assistance to line supervisors, administrators and their staff; and/or 2) assists and participates in program planning and the development of program policies and standards for the vocational rehabilitation program; conducts studies of operation and program problems and activities, and develops improvements to existing programs; updates policy and procedural manuals; assists grant aided agencies and monitors grant funded projects; develops in-service training programs; serves in a liaison capacity with various groups and organizations; speaks before groups to promote the services of the branch; develops and maintains cooperative working relationships and agreements with community agencies; attends conferences and meetings for cooperative planning or programs and services; and engages in a variety of special projects as assigned.

In a program regulating the provision of direct vocational rehabilitation services, reviews and analyzes certification requests from rehabilitation agencies, identifies deficient areas if there are any and instructs agencies on corrective measures or adjustments which must be made for certification to be granted. Reviews workers' compensation cases to identify and confirm feasibility for vocational rehabilitation services; meets with clients as necessary to explain the purpose and benefits of the vocational rehabilitation program and makes referrals to rehabilitation programs; reviews agency rehabilitation plans for propriety and acceptability in achieving the goals of rehabilitating injured employees; remands plan to rehabilitation agency if there are any deficient areas and directs revisions or corrective measures as needed. Reviews, analyzes and evaluates rehabilitation agencies' periodic progress reports relative to injured employees' rehabilitation training; determines if the agency is effectively fulfilling its responsibility of providing the necessary and required rehabilitation services to return injured employees to suitable, gainful employment; directs agencies to make necessary changes and adjustments to plans or suspends or terminates plans as needed. Follows up on injured employees who completed training to determine if they have been placed in employment for which they had been trained; determines if employees are adequately functioning in their new jobs; prepares workers' compensation case folders for medical consult

case presentations; reviews requests for determination of medical stability of injured employees; and reviews requests for redetermination of decisions made by the branch and conducts redetermination conferences to resolve the issue of controversy.

Knowledge and Abilities Required:

Knowledge of: Legislation, rules and regulations pertaining to vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities; occupations suitable for persons with disabilities; principles and practices of vocational rehabilitation and rehabilitation training; interviewing principles and techniques; basic social work methods and techniques; local employment conditions and employment opportunities; use of psychological tests and measurements in vocational counseling; public relations; and available community health and welfare resources.

Ability to: Explain the vocational rehabilitation program to clients and the public; obtain, analyze and evaluate facts; keep records and prepare reports; establish and maintain effective working relationships with clients, fellow workers, representatives of other agencies, community groups and prospective employers of persons with disabilities; speak before community groups; for some positions, provide guidance to professional vocational rehabilitation workers; and/or assign, instruct and evaluate the work of others and learn the principles and practices of supervision.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SPECIALIST V
(VOCATIONAL REHAB SPCLT V)

3.205

Distinguishing Characteristics:

Positions in this class reflect a level of professional leadership and include supervisors and program specialists. Positions in this class are typically of the following general types:

- 1) The supervisor of an operating unit responsible for planning, assigning, coordinating and evaluating the work performed by a group of vocational rehabilitation specialists and allied rehabilitation service positions and assuring that appropriate services are provided to the geographic or other service area.

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- 2) A program specialist performing the most difficult and complex program planning, evaluation and development activities, with responsibility for overall vocational rehabilitation planning or program planning, evaluation and development in one or more major areas of concern, e.g., nature, quantity and quality of services provided by the vocational rehabilitation program or developmental activity impacting on the entire division.
- 3) The specialist who reviews the work of others to ensure consistency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services in a program which certifies and regulates agencies providing such services to industrially injured workers. Responsibilities involve the review of appeals from employees and employers for reconsideration of determinations rendered by other vocational rehabilitation specialists with the authority to sustain, reverse, modify or withdraw the initial decisions; provide training on new developments in the field; and participates in program planning and evaluation activities including the development of new policies and procedures for the statewide regulatory program.

Examples of Duties: *(Positions may not be assigned all of the duties listed, nor do the examples necessarily include all the duties that may be assigned. The omission of specific statements does not preclude management from assigning such duties if such duties are a logical assignment for the position. The classification of a position should not be based solely on the examples of duties performed.)*

Plans, develops, coordinates and directs the effective daily operation of a unit in accordance with agency policies, procedures and standards; determines work priorities and deadlines; assigns cases to staff members on the basis of individual abilities, caseloads, vacation schedules and other conditions; discusses case assignments with other staff members; explains areas requiring special attention and otherwise provides guidance when necessary; meets with staff members individually and in groups; reviews case records, reports, correspondence and other materials prepared by subordinates; reviews and evaluates the work of staff members; identifies and recommends action on staff development and training needs; participates in training programs; interprets and explains policies, procedures and standards and performs other promotional and educational services; prepares and submits budget requests; sets up and maintains controls for recording of caseload distribution and

workload output; works with other agencies and community groups in matters pertaining to vocational rehabilitation; and prepares operational reports and correspondence.

Conducts major studies of policies and procedures relative to vocational rehabilitation or disability determination and associated activities and programs and develops recommendations for major new policies and/or substantial revisions affecting the program as a whole; recommends and assists administrators in the implementation of policies and the development of standards for activities and programs in these areas including interviewing, diagnosis, treatment planning, vocational placement, etc.; develops criteria for and prepares procedural manuals concerning vocational rehabilitation eligibility, services, benefits and disability determination matters; conducts studies of operational and program problems and of overall division programs; develops evaluation criteria such as quality control guides, performance standards, etc., and oversees their implementation; directs in-service training programs of the division based on needs assessment, including obtaining grants, negotiating for outside training resources, etc., and/or otherwise arranging for training; reviews and evaluates private agency program relative to vocational rehabilitation and sheltered workshops for persons with disabilities; negotiates service contracts with rehabilitation institutions; performs the full range of grants management activities including assisting agencies in developing project proposals and applying for federal funds, reviewing application for federal funds and recommending approval, disapproval or modification, monitoring the conduct of federally funded projects for conformance with objectives and project design and recommending termination or transfer of approved projects in the event of non-compliance or unsatisfactory conduct of the projects; conducts studies of the needs of individuals with disabilities for vocational rehabilitation services; and develops new techniques or methods for meeting the needs of select client groups.

Receives and reviews appeals from employees or employers for reconsideration including but not limited to determinations on plans, closures, transfers and eligibility for services made by lower level specialists; decides whether the appeal was filed in a timely manner and whether the issue of controversy is clearly defined; analyzes documents used to arrive at the original determination and considers the relevance of the new information provided; applies knowledge of worker's compensation laws and vocational rehabilitation rules and regulations to prepare clear, concise, and independent written determinations sustaining, reversing, modifying, or withdrawing initial decisions of the

branch; independently gathers and reviews journal articles, textbooks and other information on new techniques and methods in the field of vocational rehabilitation as well as new and amended laws, rules and regulations and evaluates the impact on the program's functions; makes recommendations to amend or develop new policies and procedures, program standards and guidelines; conducts training based on new developments or for specific projects; provides consultation to insurance carriers, physicians, employers, and injured workers; conducts case/caseload management and procedural evaluative reviews for Oahu and neighbor island workers' compensation vocational rehabilitation offices; and submits written reports and makes recommendations to improve services, more efficiently meet standards, or provide better statewide service consistency.

Knowledge and Abilities Required:

Knowledge of: Legislation, rules and regulations pertaining to vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities; occupations suitable for persons with disabilities; principles and practices of vocational rehabilitation and rehabilitation training; interviewing principles and techniques; basic social work methods and techniques; local employment conditions and employment opportunities; and the use of psychological tests and measurements in vocational counseling.

Ability to: Obtain, analyze and evaluate facts; keep records and prepare reports; explain the vocational rehabilitation program to clients and the public; establish and maintain effective working relationships with clients, fellow workers, representatives of other agencies, and prospective employers of persons with disabilities; and, for some positions, plan, assign and review the work of others and/or conduct program evaluation and development activities and negotiate contracts with outside agencies.